

**From:** [Genevieve Angle - NOAA Federal](#)  
**To:** [Kristine Koch/R10/USEPA/US@EPA](#)  
**Cc:** [Chip Humphrey/R10/USEPA/US@EPA](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Portland Harbor RI  
**Date:** 02/05/2013 09:28 PM

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Kristine,

It looks good except the first sentence of the third paragraph should read: "Critical habitat has been designated for four species of salmon and steelhead by NFMS in the lower Willamette River and proposed for one species." Critical habitat for Lower Columbia River coho salmon was just proposed last month and will probably be designated in the next 6 months or so. Critical habitat is currently designated for LCR and UWR Chinook salmon and LCR and UWR steelhead in the lower Willamette River. Let me know if you have any other questions.

Genevieve

On Tue, Feb 5, 2013 at 7:29 PM, <[Koch.Kristine@epamail.epa.gov](mailto:Koch.Kristine@epamail.epa.gov)> wrote:

Genevieve, in reviewing section 3 of the RI, there was a discussion on habitat at the site. I thought it would be appropriate to also include a discussion of critical habitat for T&E species. I have put the following language in the current version of the document. I was wondering if you could check this and see if it is adequate or needs editing. If you feel it needs editing, please do so and send it back to me and I'll incorporate your changes. It would be great if you could do this by Thursday (sorry for the late notice).

Thanks!

Kristine

### **Critical Habitat**

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) requires the federal government to designate "critical habitat" for any species it lists under the ESA; in this case, salmon and steelhead. "Critical habitat" is defined as: (1) specific areas within the geographical area occupied by the species at the time of listing, if they contain physical or biological features essential to conservation, and those features may require special management considerations or protection; and (2) specific areas outside the geographical area occupied by the species if the agency determines that the area itself is essential for conservation.

The ESA protects threatened and endangered species in several ways. Under Section 7, all federal agencies must ensure that any actions they authorize, fund, or carry out are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species, or destroy or adversely modify its designated critical habitat. These complementary requirements apply only to federal agency actions, and the latter only to habitat that has been designated. A critical habitat designation does not set up a preserve or refuge, and applies only when federal funding, permits, or projects are involved. Critical habitat requirements do not apply to citizens engaged in activities on private land that do not involve a federal agency.

Critical habitat has been designated for six(??) species of salmon and steelhead by NFMS in the lower Willamette River. Depending on the species, juvenile salmonids may spend from a few hours to several years in freshwater areas before migrating to the ocean. On their journey, juveniles must migrate downstream through every riverine and estuarine corridor between their natal lake or stream and the ocean.

Juvenile salmonids need abundant food sources, including insects, crustaceans, and other small fish. They need places to hide from predators (mostly birds and bigger fish), such as under logs, root wads and boulders in the stream, and beneath overhanging vegetation. They also need places to seek refuge from periodic high flows (side channels and off channel areas) and from warm summer water temperatures (coldwater springs and deep pools). Returning adults generally do not feed in fresh water but instead rely on limited energy stores to migrate, mature, and spawn. Like juveniles, they also require cool water and places to rest and hide from predators.

During all life stages salmon and steelhead require cool water that is free of contaminants. They also require migratory corridors with adequate passage conditions (timing, water quality, and water quantity) to allow access to the various habitats required to complete their life cycle.

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